

Institution: University College London		
Unit of Assessment: 31 – Theology and Religious Studies		
Title of case study: Palestinian Statelessness: Reshaping Policy, Public Debate, and Creating New Open-Access Resources		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2015-2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Seth Anziska	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Mohamed S. Farsi-Polonsky Associate Professor of Jewish-Muslim Relations	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: September 2015-present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2018-present		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Anziska's research into the history of Palestinian statelessness has reached diverse public audiences across the Middle East, US and Europe, and his findings have reshaped contemporary policy discussions about the political horizons of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with policymakers, diplomats in the US and Europe, and leading Israeli and Palestinian officials. Anziska's uncovering of vital new sources about the 1982 Lebanon War has led to the publication of primary archival material in an open source format in Arabic, Hebrew, and English in <i>The New York Review of Books</i>, <i>the Journal of Palestine Studies</i>, <i>Al-Akhbar</i>, and <i>Jadaliyya</i>. These documents have fostered public debate over the legacy of US, Israeli, and Lebanese involvement in the Sabra and Shatila massacre across political divides in the Middle East.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>In <i>Preventing Palestine: A Political History from Camp David to Oslo</i> (R1), Dr. Seth Anziska (UCL's Mohamed S. Farsi-Polonsky Associate Professor of Jewish-Muslim Relations since September 2015) set out to answer how and why Palestinian statelessness persists despite longstanding efforts to address their quest for self-determination. The project tackled a central conundrum in the field of 20th-century international and global history, and brought local and regional narratives into conversation with one another. His research draws on Arabic, Hebrew, and English sources and explores diverse themes that include diaspora Jewish culture, inter-Arab politics, domestic developments and the global Cold War, offering an award-winning scholarly study that accounts for complex historical agency and traverses national divides (R1).</p> <p>Anziska's study revealed that, in the aftermath of decolonisation, during an era of mounting global attention to human rights, Palestinian claims for self-determination began to receive a sympathetic hearing in the United States and Europe. Yet the negotiations over their political fate during the 1978 Camp David Accords served to undermine the prospect of sovereignty. Combining the political and conceptual history of Israel's endorsement of limited autonomy, along with the physical expansion of the settlement project in the occupied territories and the military developments in Lebanon, the book (R1) and associated 2017 articles (R2) and (R3) reframe the early history of the peace process. <i>Preventing Palestine</i> re-evaluates the Camp David summit and traces its impact on the limited political horizons for Palestinian sovereignty. The summit brought Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat, and U.S. President Jimmy Carter together for 13 intensive days of negotiations, and the result has often been depicted as Carter's greatest diplomatic success. But the new sources uncovered by Anziska reveal a more troubling story about Palestinian political disenfranchisement that went hand in hand with the crafting of a bilateral peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. The rights of non-Jewish residents in the occupied territories were relegated to separate discussions over autonomy between Egypt, Israel, and the United States (R3). The outcome of these talks stripped Palestinians of national or collective political sovereignty in favour of limited self-rule, separating individuals from territory alongside the physical expansion of Israeli settlements. This legacy has real world consequences for the conflict today, as discussed in Anziska's article on the Palestinian question in the era of Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu (R2).</p>		

As the first scholar to utilise much of the most recently declassified sensitive historical material on the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 1982 Lebanon War, Anziska made these primary sources available as an online archival resource. *Sabra and Shatila: New Revelations* (R4), published in *The New York Review of Books* in 2018, contextualised and made accessible 400+ pages of primary source material for those who cannot access archives directly, often for political reasons of limited access to Israel for Arab and Palestinian researchers. Anziska's research (R1-R4) combined diverse archival sources and literature, which are often siloed into disparate historical accounts. Drawing on newly declassified records obtained during extensive fieldwork, Anziska brought together sources from the Middle East, US, and UK. This methodological approach was anchored in qualitative archival research positioned across geographic divisions, disparate historiographies, and scattered repositories in Arabic, Hebrew, and English, giving voice to a cross-section of local agents, ideologies and external powers.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1.** Anziska, Seth. *Preventing Palestine: A Political History from Camp David to Oslo* (Princeton University Press, 2018). Submitted to REF 2021. Winner of the British Association of Jewish Studies Book Award (2019).
- R2.** Anziska, Seth. "Neither Two States nor One: The Palestine Question in the Age of Trump." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 46.3 (2017), 57-74. [doi:10.1525/jps.2017.46.3.57](https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2017.46.3.57). Peer reviewed.
- R3.** Anziska, Seth. "Autonomy as State Prevention: The Palestinian Question after Camp David, 1979-1982." *Humanity Journal*, Special Issue on Transformative Occupations in the Modern Middle East, 8.2 (2017). [doi:10.1353/hum.2017.0020](https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2017.0020) Peer reviewed. Submitted to REF 2021.
- R4.** Anziska, Seth. "Sabra and Shatila: New Revelations," *The New York Review of Books*, Sept. 17, 2018. Essay and open online repository. Versions of this primary material also published in *Jadaliyya* (28 Feb 2019) and the *Journal of Palestine Studies* (25 September 2018). <https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2018/09/17/sabra-and-shatila-new-revelations/>

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Shaping and informing debate and discussion among policy experts

Anziska's research (R1) changed how the Palestinian question is considered by international policymakers, especially the concept of "autonomy," undermining the perceptions of political stalemate with new historical insights and forcing a change in conversation and political debate over possible diplomatic outcomes that limit Palestinian self-determination. In breaking with conventional interpretations of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Anziska's research garnered close critical engagement from across the political spectrum, forcing responses from leading Israeli and American diplomats as well as generating sustained public debate in the Arab world. Key stakeholders on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the US, UK, and Middle East have organised discussions around this research (particularly R1 and R4) and invited Anziska to consult on policy implications, shaping debate and discussion amongst policy experts on Palestinian statelessness. This policy impact has been especially notable for its global reach.

Between August 2018 and December 2019, Anziska spoke or gave briefings at ten policy events in five different countries to a total audience of approximately 800 people. These presentations helped shape the debate about the ways in which Palestine statelessness has been perpetuated and how it might be addressed. Anziska has presented his findings (R1) to government officials and policy experts from Palestine, Jordan, the USA, the UK, Norway, and Sweden, including in 2019, Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, House of Lords, and in 2018, foreign policy advisors to US Senator Bernie Sanders. He spoke to audiences of 200+ people alongside leading figures including former Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shlomo Ben Ami, Palestinian scholar Areej Sabbagh-Khoury, and Sari Nusseibeh, a leading Palestinian political figure. In Washington, D.C., Anziska presented his findings to the Foundation for Middle East Peace (FMEP) and Middle East Institute (21 September 2018) to >150 attendees (plus 796 views on YouTube 04/08/20

and 1075 listens on Soundcloud 12/08/20) (A). FMEP's goal was "to expose an audience of subject-matter experts, diplomats, think tank analysts, and activists to Anziska's research, in order to challenge them to think beyond the existing and past peace paradigms, and to energize and empower them to imagine what a serious, viable way forward will entail". The President of the FMEP, confirms that it was "a tremendous success in achieving that goal" (B). They describe how "by shining a spotlight on root causes of the failure of peace efforts, [Anziska] has already contributed to the ongoing shift in the public discourse around Israel-Palestine, including the push for a U.S. policy that demands greater accountability from Israel, including by putting conditions on U.S. foreign assistance" and asserts that "should there one day again be a U.S. administration that attempts to promote Israeli-Palestinian peace, Anziska's book will be an invaluable resource and tool for those pushing for a U.S. policy that is not a return to the failed approaches of the past, but one that is instead grounded in the lessons of history, including those [of (R1)]" (B). In London, Anziska presented on (R1) to a closed group of 25 guests at the European Council on Foreign Relations (11 October 2018), which included experts at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. His role in informing and shaping policy debate is indicated by a Policy Fellow at the Council: "Anziska's book has been an indispensable resource which has shaped my own thinking and policy recommendations to European governments, particularly in relation to President Donald Trump's 'Deal of the Century'. I have also referenced his work in my own analysis of the US plan and frequently recommended '*Preventing Palestine*' to European diplomats" (C). Anziska worked with the U.S./Middle East Project (USMEP), a New York- and London-based independent policy institute to support their provision of non-partisan analysis of the Middle East peace process and policy options to prevent conflict throughout the region. As a visiting fellow, Anziska briefed government officials, NGOs, and regional experts on his research findings bi-annually since 2015 (Israel Policy Forum, September 2018; Bruno Kreisky Forum, May 2019; Open Society Foundation, June 2017). At the 2019 USMEP board meeting, he presented his findings (R1) as part of a closed door panel with the Palestinian Ambassador to the UK, a former US Ambassador to Egypt and Israel, and several other officials (including a former Israeli Foreign Minister and a former head of the Mossad).

The implications of Anziska's research challenged received wisdom about the failure to take Palestinian political claims seriously, particularly among a new generation of Israeli policymakers. Both Israeli and Palestinian officials have engaged closely with (R1) and endorsed it publically. Former Israeli Ambassador to the US Itamar Rabinovich wrote in 2018 that "*Preventing Palestine* is mandatory reading for understanding the complexities and ironies of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee member Hanan Ashrawi has recommended Anziska's work in high-level meetings to senior donors of the Palestinian Authority and wrote that (R1) is "an essential account of a reality obscured by hostile political agendas and unabashed bias. [...] [A] historical revelation of enormous magnitude." Anziska has debated the implications of his findings with over a dozen mid-career Israeli officials at the Harvard Kennedy School in Cambridge, MA (September 2019). The Senior Programme Manager who invited Anziska designs seminars to "strengthen leadership skills, cohort build and explore the American Jewish Community." They describe Anziska's research as an "essential perspective for [the fellows] to hear", and explain how the session provided "a framework" to "be a bit more open to each other's perspectives, and to step out of their own comfort zones", enabling the fellows to reflect on their positions on the conflict by engaging in debate with Anziska and one another (D). Former US President Jimmy Carter reviewed a pre-publication copy of Anziska's manuscript, and his lead Israel/Palestine advisor at the Carter Center has relied on (R1) "to set the historical narrative straight for our own efforts to find a just solution to the conflict" when crafting policy reports and writing on the Center's work in the region. The advisor states, "[Anziska's] ideas have impacted our understanding of the very broad and structural principles undergirding current Palestinian statelessness", which has led to "a more careful and nuanced use of such concepts as self-rule, autonomy and sovereignty" in the Center's internal and external communications (E). In commenting on the presentation of these findings at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute in 2019, the advisor added, "Anziska must be credited for engaging with members of the public who were not always sympathetic to his conclusions and were even hostile, challenging his research" (E).

Creating open-access archives for Arabic-, English- and Hebrew-reading audiences

Anziska's activities have shaped public awareness over the fate of Palestinian self-determination by making archival material available for the first time to an audience of the Arabic-, English- and Hebrew-reading public. The material Anziska discovered is now widely available online in an open access format (R4) hosted by *The New York Review of Books* (>100,000 readers), which provides an opportunity for the wider public to inspect sensitive archival material. This is particularly significant because for political reasons the majority of Arab and Palestinian populations have limited access to Israel and its archives. It was also published in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* and the leading Middle East-focused online platform *Jadaliyya*, with scholarly essays introducing the primary material in both cases. These publications deepened public understanding by providing an online repository for the broader, Arabic-, English- and Hebrew-reading public to examine the roots of political violence in the 1982 War, the massacre of hundreds of Palestinian civilians by Christian Phalange militiamen under Israeli control, and the consequences of this violence. Lebanon's leading *Al-Akhbar* newspaper (circulation 90,000) featured Arabic translations of Anziska's findings on the front page (29 September 2018) and an interview with Anziska which generated public discussion of the findings, reflected in reviews of (R1) (F) and wider Arabic media coverage such as in *An-Nahar* newspaper (2 October 2018) (G). In the context of Lebanese politics this attention and dissemination is especially notable, given the political importance of the warlords who carried out the violence in 1982 and are now in power. Positive reviews of (R4) in Hebrew journals and newspapers, as well as continued availability of the material online, signals that this research is shaping memorialization practices in Israel, where much of this topic remains highly charged and under-addressed by scholars. In *The Regional Thinking Forum*, one reviewer discussed the way (R1) is reshaping how Israel understands its past and engagement with the peace process: "From the historical perspective it offers, one can better see the profound change that has taken place in the Israeli public in the last two decades" (F). The provenance of the documents Anziska unearthed were discussed in the leading Israeli newspaper *Yedioth Aharonoth* in February 2020 (F), while reviewers in *Haaretz* called the work "meticulously researched" in a featured 2019 essay looking at the way this history has shaped the discourse around Palestinian statehood today (F).

Shaping public awareness of Palestinian statelessness

Anziska's activities have shaped public awareness over the fate of Palestinian self-determination and have reached a large international audience. Between (R1)'s release in 2018 and the end of the impact period, Anziska sold over 2000 hardback (a paperback version was published in March 2020). As an indication of the regional and global reach of the research, the Institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut are producing an Arabic trade press translation of *Preventing Palestine*, intended for a general readership. The book has been the subject of leading current and religious affairs podcasts, including the *Tel Aviv Review* (26 November 2018) and *The Sacred* (14 November 2018, 1851 listens on Soundcloud alone). There have also been over fifty published reviews and discussions of (R1), in more than five languages (including French, Spanish, German, Norwegian and Dutch). This includes leading print and online outlets such as *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times*, *Haaretz*, *The Jordan Times*, *Orient XXI*, *The New Rambler Review*, *the Los Angeles Review of Books*, *the Cairo Review of Books*, *Al-Akhbar*, and *Yediot Aharonoth* (F). The book generated responses ranging from a featured review by US diplomat Dennis Ross in *Foreign Policy* to critical reviews in the Arabic press. This engagement with Anziska's research in the international press has forced a reconsideration of received wisdom about Palestinian statelessness and the future of the conflict across the political spectrum. The conversation it has engendered is indicated by (R1)'s treatment by *Fathom* ('For a deeper understanding of Israel and the region'). In February 2019, *Fathom* published a critical review of (R1) as part of an exchange format whereby part 1 constituted the review and part 2, Anziska's response to it. In using this conversation-based format, *Fathom* acknowledged (R1)'s role in shaping public debate about Palestinian statelessness. Even those who disagreed with the findings, such as the author of part 1, recognized the contribution of the work. "The book must receive the credit it deserves," wrote the author, a former Israeli legal advisor at Camp David. "Anziska did a very good research job and has collected and pieced together an enormous amount of information, including information derived from newly-declassified American and Israeli records, some of which even an avid consumer of books related to the Middle East peace

process like me has not previously seen" (F, p.25). *Fathom* published a further piece on (R1) in June 2019, demonstrating its continued relevance to their audience. Anziska's research also featured in a documentary made for France TV/3 Via Stella: *Camp David: La Prix de la Paix* (H), which aired in 2019. The director wrote, "*Preventing Palestine: A Political History from Camp David to Oslo* has been one of my main sources for the writing of the screenplay of this film and the dialogue we had with Dr. Anziska before the shooting of interview was crucial [...] everything you can hope for as a documentary director: a great insight on the subject expressed in a clear, straightforward and concise way." (I). In recognition of its importance, *Preventing Palestine* has been awarded the British Association of Jewish Studies Best Book of 2019, named one of the "best human rights books of 2018" by the Hong Kong Free Press, and included by the Forward in a list of books that US officials "should have read" before unveiling their troubling diplomatic initiative in January 2020 (F).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- A. Recordings of Anziska's public presentations (Middle East Institute, Washington DC: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bL7Ce9fA2m0> ; Bergen Global, Norway: <https://soundcloud.com/user-444604854/preventing-palestine-why-statelessness-is-so-important> & screenshots conforming view counts.
- B. Testimonial: Foundation for Middle East Peace
- C. Testimonial: European Council on Foreign Relations
- D. Testimonial: Senior Programme Manager, Harvard Kennedy School
- E. Testimonial: Carter Center
- F. Reviews of *Preventing Palestine* in the press
- G. Seth Anziska, "How Israel Undermined Washington and Stalled the Dream of Palestinian Statehood," *The New York Times* (online and international print edition), Sept. 20, 2018. Reprinted in Arabic in AnNahar, Lebanon.)
- H. Documentary: France TV/3 Via Stella, "Camp David: Le Prix de la Paix": <https://www.francetvpro.fr/corse-viastella/programmes/32794940>
- I. Testimonial: France TV
- J. Podcasts and Interviews with Anziska: Foundations for Middle East Peace; The Sacred; TLV Review; Al-Akhbar (Arabic interview); Toynbee Prize Interview.